

COVID-19 Update 08.05.2020

Hello everyone,

Director Tewalt is hosting folks from the Correctional Leaders' Association this evening so he's asked me to share tonight's updates.

Face coverings – We've heard loud and clear that the move to the medical masks has been a challenge. Today, Chief of Staff Christine Starr had a call with the state epidemiologist on this topic and in the next couple of days you can expect some modified guidance to come out. I'm sure the idea of new guidance has some of you rolling your eyes, but we think the new guidance will make things much clearer and easier for everyone. In the meantime, if you're using medical masks and you have one break, get wet, or otherwise damaged, please ask for more. We have them and are happy to provide **additional** masks for your use. I've heard that people are buying them online and you don't need to be doing that; we will provide them.

Staff testing – Great news: No new staff positives today! This means our total number of staff who've tested positive remains at 93.

Incarcerated population testing – Today, everyone residing at the SBWCC and in the Reception and Diagnostic Unit (RDU) of ISCI were tested. When these results come back from the RDU, it will give us some operational flexibility to move people from the RDU into our other facilities. On Thursday of this week, the rest of the residents at SICI will be tested. Our current testing numbers are: 2,815 tests, 127 pending, 1,706 negative, 74 positive with symptoms, 177 positive without symptoms, and 731 inactive (i.e., medically-cleared or have left IDOC custody).

Movement into our facilities – A lot of people are asking when transports from county jails will be restarting and the answer is, it's complicated. We'd love to get transports restarted but have to balance that with the risk that introducing new people into our facilities presents. We are working with county jails to establish quarantines and **the testing of** state-sentenced prisoners who are awaiting transfer into IDOC facilities. But not all jails are equally-resourced and some may not be able to pull this off. We also have to consider the community dynamics in the counties where the jails are located and how widespread COVID-19 is in that area. We are currently working with our state epidemiologists to devise the safest plan to gradually restart transports without exposing people to additional risk.

That's all for now. Please take care of yourselves and each other.

Best,
Bree

Bree E. Derrick
Deputy Director
Idaho Dept. of Corrections